

To the Country Representative of the Republic of Nicaragua,

I, Edward Snowden, citizen of the United States of America, am writing to request asylum in the Republic of Nicaragua because of the risk of being persecuted by the government of the United States and its agents in relation to my decision to make public serious violations on the part of the government of the United States of its Constitution, specifically of its Fourth and Fifth Amendments, and of various treaties of the United Nations that are binding on my country. As a result of my political opinions, and my desire to exercise my freedom of speech, through which I've shown that the government of the United States is intercepting the majority of communications in the world, the government of the United States has publicly announced a criminal investigation against me.

Prominent members of Congress and others in the media have accused me of being a traitor and have called for me to be jailed or executed as a result of having communicated this information to the public. Some of the charges that have been presented against me by the Justice Department of the United States are connected to the 1917 Espionage Act, one of which includes life in prison among the possible sentences.

An international precedent for providing asylum to figures in my circumstances has already been established, with Ecuador granting asylum to the founder of WikiLeaks, Julian Assange in relation to this kind of retaliatory investigation. My case is also very similar to that of the American soldier Bradley Manning, who made public government information through WikiLeaks revealing war crimes, was arrested by the United States government and has been treated inhumanely during his time in prison. He was put in solitary confinement before his trial and the U.N. anti-torture representative judged that Mr. Manning was submitted to cruel and inhumane acts by the United States government.

The trial against Bradley Manning is ongoing now, and secret documents have been presented to the court and secret witnesses have testified. I believe that, given these circumstances, it is unlikely that I would receive a fair trial or proper treatment prior to that trial, and face the possibility of life in prison or even death.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Edward Snowden', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Edward Joseph Snowden  
Moscow. 30 June 2013